

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 10/694,215

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 have been examined. Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and claims 4-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

I. Preliminary Matters

The Examiner has not acknowledged the drawings filed on October 28, 2003.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate, in the next Office Action, whether such drawings are acceptable.

Applicant has amended the specification to correct a minor error. No new matter has been added.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,708,547 to Oishi (“Oishi”).

A. Claim 1

Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference. For example, claim 1 recites that an outer periphery of the liner is supported on the inner surface of the casing or the shutter member by an outer annular protrusion formed on the inner surface of the casing or the

shutter member concentrically with the disk. The outer annular protrusion is positioned outward of an outer edge of the disk.

The Examiner maintains that Oishi discloses the claimed liner. Oishi discloses a liner 8 that is supported away from the inner surface of the casing 14, via the step 10a (Figures 1 and 2; col. 3, lines 40-55 and col. 4, lines 46-49). However, as shown in Figure 1, the step 10a overlaps with the outer edge of the disk 2. Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference.

B. Claims 2 and 3

Since claims 2 and 3 are dependent upon claim 1, Applicant submits that claims 2 and 3 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

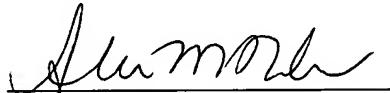
The Examiner has rejected claims 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Oishi in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,256,168 to Hales (“Hales”). However, since claims 4-7 are dependent upon claim 1, and Hales fails to cure the deficient teachings of Oishi, in regard to claim 1, Applicant submits that claims 4-7 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

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In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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